

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 682

By Parkinson

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Velma Lois Jones of Memphis upon receipt of the President's Volunteer Service Award and the accompanying designation as a Drum Major for Service.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Velma Lois Jones who has been selected as a Drum Major for Service by The White House Office of Faith-based Neighborhood Partnerships for her countless acts of extraordinary service in her community and across the State; and

WHEREAS, on Monday, February 13, Mrs. Jones was presented the coveted President's Volunteer Service Award at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building adjacent to The White House in Washington, D. C.; and

WHEREAS, inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s historic speech on the Drum Major Instinct and his famous quote from therein, which is to be inscribed in full on his newly dedicated monument on the National Mall, the President's Volunteer Service Award is a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service in their own communities; and

WHEREAS, Velma Lois Jones is surely worthy and deserving to be a Drum Major for Service honoree, for she has worked tirelessly for more than half of a century, serving in prominent positions on the local, state, and national levels in the fields of education, civil rights, politics, religion, and community service, proving over and over again her outstanding leaderships skills and abilities; and

WHEREAS, a retired educator solidly devoted to providing students with proficiencies in mathematics, Mrs. Jones graduated from Lemoyne Owen College, earned her master's degree at Columbia University's Teacher College and completed studies at University of Memphis (then Memphis State) and Michigan State University; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jones was the first black classroom teacher ever elected president of the Tennessee Education Association, and her tenure is further distinguished by the fact that she was the longest serving president in the Association's history. She also served as a board member of the National Education Association; and

WHEREAS, she is a current board member and past-president of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and a three-time president of the honorable Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Beta Epsilon Omega Chapter; and

WHEREAS, in keeping with her dedication to service, Velma Jones has become a spokesperson on the AARP State Team on Social Security and is now associate team leader for the Memphis Region and a member of the local Advocacy Team and Chapter 2443; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jones, who has lived her entire life within the city of Memphis, has been a long-time and conscientious member of the Trinity CME Church; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jones epitomizes the spirit and commitment to excellence that are characteristics of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Velma Jones for her dedication to the state of Tennessee, its students and teachers, and its citizens at large; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we recognize and highly commend Velma Lois Jones of Memphis upon her recent receipt of the President's Volunteer Service Award as a Drum Major for Service. We extend our appreciation to her for a life-time of dedication to teaching and community service, and we wish Mrs. Jones much success and satisfaction in all her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.